

Barber Shop
3251 M Street, N.W.
Georgetown
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-121

HABS
DC
GEO
80-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

BARBER SHOP

HABS

DC

6E0

80-

Location: 3251 M Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

Present Owners: Mrs. Marie Ray Vilsack and
Mrs. Antoinette Ray Montgomery.

Present Occupant: Coniglio Barber Shop.

Present Use: Barber Shop.

Statement of
Significance: Example of a late 19th Century commercial
Georgetown structure, unpretentious in
character but typical in design.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: This building was erected on part of Lot 16, Square 37 (Old Georgetown) now Lot 810, Square 1207. References are to records of Recorder of Deeds, District of Columbia. The following is an incomplete chain of title:

1816 Deed April 18, 1816, recorded in
Liber AL folio 254
Jacob Mountz, Collector of Taxes for the
Corporation of Georgetown
To
Lemuel Shaw
Sold for benefit tax.

1832 Deed February 7, 1832, recorded in
Liber WB 39 folio 242
Corporation of Georgetown
To
Lemuel Shaw

1849 Deed May 8, 1849, recorded in
Liber JAS 9 folio 147
Lemuel Shaw
To
William Nelson
Title of William Nelson acquired by
John Marbury, trustee

HABS
DC
GEO
80-

- 1858 Deed March 22, 1858
John Marbury, trustee
To
William Dowling
Sells estate of William Nelson, deceased,
under Chancery Court Decree of March 30,
1855. Sale ratified in cause of Richard
Hist et ux et al vs Henry S. Nelson for
\$675.
- 1866 Deed August 31, 1866, recorded in
Liber RMH 19 folio 308
William Dowling
To
William D. Cassin
Frederick W. Jones
Trustees.
Sold for default to secure the payment of
a certain debt.
- 1871 Deed August 7, 1871
Frederick W. Jones
William D. Cassin
Trustees
To
Stephen McArdle
Sold to William J. Dyer as agent of the
second party for \$3,200.
- 1890 Deed November 6, 1890, recorded in
Liber 1542 folio 38
Stephen McArdle et ux Elizabeth
To
John J. Harrington
- 1901 Deed November 15, 1901, recorded in
Liber 2625 folio 1
Joseph H. Bradley
Alphonse M. Baer
Trustees for John J. Harrington et ux Annie E.
To
George W. Ray
Sold for \$1,875.
- 1905 Deed November 4, 1905, recorded in
Liber 2872 folio 480
George W. Ray et ux Lillian E.
To
Cora M. Ray
Deed November 4, 1905
Cora M. Ray
To
George W. Ray

HABS
DC
650
80-

1931 Deed October 26, 1931, recorded in
Liber 6608 folio 107
Marie Ray Vilsack
Antoinette Ray Montgomery
(only heirs at law of George W. Ray, deceased)
To
Lillian Ray
(mother of Marie and Antoinette)
1937 Deed November 13, 1937, recorded December 28, 1937
Liber 7184 folio 507
Marie Ray Vilsack
Antoinette Ray Montgomery
(only heirs at law of Lillian Ray, deceased)
To
Robert H. Marcus
Deed December 18, 1937, recorded December 28, 1937
Liber 7184 folio 508
Robert H. Marcus
To
Mrs. Marie Ray Vilsack (of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
Mrs. Antoinette Ray Montgomery (of New Orleans,
Louisiana)

2. Date of erection: The building was probably built between 1887 and 1890. It is not indicated in Hopkins' 1887 map (Library of Congress, Map Division, Map G1275; H6; 1887). Its sale price indicates improvement between 1871 and 1890.
3. Architect: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: None known.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: Sign added in 1911.
6. Important old views: None known.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

Washington directories provide the following tenant information.

1913-1966 Frank Coniglio, barber

Prepared by Dr. James Philip Noffsinger
Architect
National Park Service
August 15, 1966

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This structure, which has no outstanding architectural characteristics or important historical associations, is, nevertheless, typical of the commercial architecture built in Georgetown during the late nineteenth century.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair; structure has been relatively unaltered.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Approximately 10' (two bays) x 35'; two stories in height.
2. Foundations: Stone foundation extends 8" above grade of public sidewalk on south elevation.
3. Wall construction: Red common bond brick is painted white; sandstone block above foundation spans south (street) facade. Appearance of west wall indicates that structure may have been narrowed to present width at an undetermined date. Projecting brick belt course spans elevation at spring line of second floor window arches.
4. Chimneys: Brick chimney at northwest corner of building.

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Simple wooden entrance door is glazed above plain inset panel; flanking pilasters support small entablature with dentils which is surmounted by simple wooden cornice. Transom over door has been filled in for air-conditioning unit.
- b. Windows and shutters: One-over-one-light double-hung wooden sash windows on second floor; semi-circular arched opening is framed by double course of header rowlocks. Wooden first-floor shop front is apparently original; transom over shop window, dado below.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Flat roof of undetermined covering.
- b. Framing: Unknown.
- c. Cornice, eaves: Projecting stamped tin cornice is supported visually by thin fluted tin pilasters which rest upon lower entablature.
- d. Dormers: None.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

- 1. Floor plans: Long, rectangular principal space on street level accomodates four barber's chairs in line from front to back; secondary space behind this is separated from principal area by partition of wall-board, wooden grill above. The partition does not appear to be contemporary with original construction of building.
- 2. Stairways: Single stairway to upper floor is hidden behind partition.
- 3. Flooring: Modern green and white asphalt tile covers floor. Marble base on west wall.

BARBER SHOP

HABS No. DC-121 (Page 6)

HABS
DC
620
80-

4. Ceiling and wall finish: Plastered walls are in poor physical condition. Ceiling is covered with modern pressed fiber tile.
5. Doorways and doors: Crudely framed opening at west end of partition allows access to space behind.
6. Trim: Two wooden Corinthian colonettes support wooden architrave on west wall.
7. Hardware: Porcelain barber's chairs and incidental accessories.
8. Lighting: Two types of white opaque glass and porcelain electrical fixtures hang from ceiling by chains.
9. Heating: Appears to be centrally heated through grill.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The building faces south on M Street, N.W., between Wisconsin Avenue and Potomac Street, about two blocks north of the Potomac River. This is on the fringe of a poorly kept up section of the Georgetown commercial strip which extends westward along M Street to the Key Bridge.
2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: None.
4. Walks: Fronts on concrete public sidewalk to the immediate south of the building.
5. Landscaping: None.

Prepared by Thomas R. Martinson
Student Assistant Architect
National Park Service
August 9, 1966